

The Chassidische Vibe

THE BEIS MOSHIACH MAGAZINE
FOR N'SHEI U'VNOS CHABAD

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Your Pesach Trip**

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Half G-d**

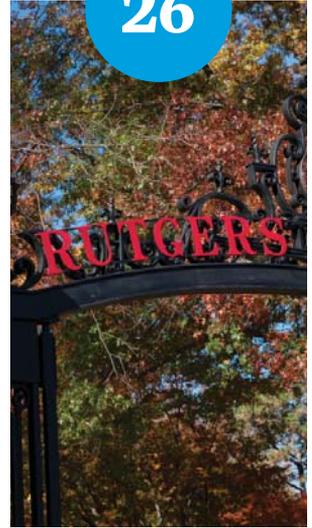
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Don't Pass Over
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TILL 120 AND BEYOND!

We commonly wish people on happy occasions “biz ah hundred un tzvantzik - till 120!” But what if someone lives beyond that? What do we wish them then?

This Yud Aleph Nissan we celebrate the Rebbe’s 120th birthday and this question takes on a more practical meaning than ever: what should we wish the Rebbe, and really, what should we wish ourselves?

At a special yechidus in the year 5720 (1960), the Rebbe was discussing the meaning of life with a group of college students: “Until 120, life is experienced at one level, and at 121, 122 and 123, etc., it is carried on at another level, and thus we go higher and higher in the realm of spirit.”

120 is the end of a lifetime, but not the end of life. It’s a time for life on a new level. It’s a time to find an area in our life where we feel our *hiskashrus* has gotten a little “rusty” and instead of trying to clean it up and fix it, just start over. Give it a new life! And in the merit of renewing our *hiskashrus*, may we have the *zechus* to see the Rebbe with our own eyes, beginning a new era and a new level of life, with Moshiach now!

Wishing our readers a kosher and freilichen Pesach

The Editors

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**BEIS
MOSHIACH**



Henny
Elishevitz

HALF MAN, HALF G-D

WHY DO WE NEED A REBBE IF WE'RE SUPPOSED TO DAVEN ONLY TO HASHEM?

A CONFLICT AND ITS SOLUTION AS INSPIRED BY THE "DVAR MALCHUS" SICHA OF 11 NISSAN 5751

"Mommy?"

"Yes, Moishy?"

"Mommy, what are you doing?"

"I am trying to write to the Rebbe." (But you're constantly distracting me...)

"Mommy?"

"What, Moishy??"

"Mommy, why are you writing to the Rebbe?"

"Because there's something that I have some doubts about, and I want the Rebbe to give me guidance regarding what would be the correct thing to do."

"Mommy, does the Rebbe always know what needs to be done?"

(Now, I have totally left my scribbled rough draft and give my complete attention to my inquisitive little boy:)

"What do *you* say? What do *you* think?"

"I think so, because he's a *navi*." (He furrows his sweet little brow in deep contemplation.) "You know, Mommy? Rivky told me that the Rebbe is an '*ish Elokim* — a G-dly man.' What

does it mean that he's a man of G-d? Aren't all Yidden people of G-d?"

"What important questions you're asking, Moishy! I'm very impressed by the profound way you are thinking, examining things in such depth. What a little *talmid chacham* you are! Moishy, what does it mean to be a man of G-d?"

"Fulfilling Hashem's mitzvos, listening to what He says." (After contemplating for a moment.) "But goyim can't be men of G-d, because He didn't give them a *neshama*. They don't say '*Modeh Ani*'!"

"You're absolutely right. A Jew always belongs to Hashem, and we see this all the more when he does Hashem's will. But the Rebbe is more than this — 'a man of G-d.' Even though each one of us is a literal part of Hashem, the Rebbe is not just that. Although he is a man, he is also from his upper half *Elokim* — that's what the Medrash tells us. It means that not only he has a *neshama* that's part of Hashem, but like half of him is Hashem."

"Is that why when Uncle Leizer was very sick, you davened to Hashem and also wrote to the Rebbe and asked for a bracha that he should be healthy?"



“*Chas v’shalom*, Moishy! It’s forbidden to daven to the Rebbe! We daven only to Hashem! But I understand your question. Come, let’s try to understand this with the help of a practical example: If you need a glass from the cabinet over the kitchen counter, what should you do?”

“I can climb on a chair, then onto the counter, and then take out the glass... But it can also break along the way, because it’s a little hard for me. I’m still not very big. But if there’s someone who is big, I’ll ask him to take it down for me...”

“Very good, Moishy. You’re a responsible boy who understands when you need to ask for help, and your explanation is exactly like the answer to your question. You can ask from Hashem on your own, and He also wants us always to remember that He, and He alone, can give us all that we need – and so we daven

to Him. However, if we want to ‘succeed’ even more, we ask the Rebbe to help us ‘bring down’ the bracha to us in this physical world.”

“So, the Rebbe is like a tall man who brings down Hashem’s *brachos* to us? That’s why they call him ‘a man of G-d’?”

“Moishy, my sweet little *chassid*! The Rebbe is so much more than that because he literally possesses the revealed koach of G-d. Hashem chose him to be the *shliach* connecting Jews to their Creator. However, maybe we can explain this some other time, because I really need to write to the Rebbe now. All right?”

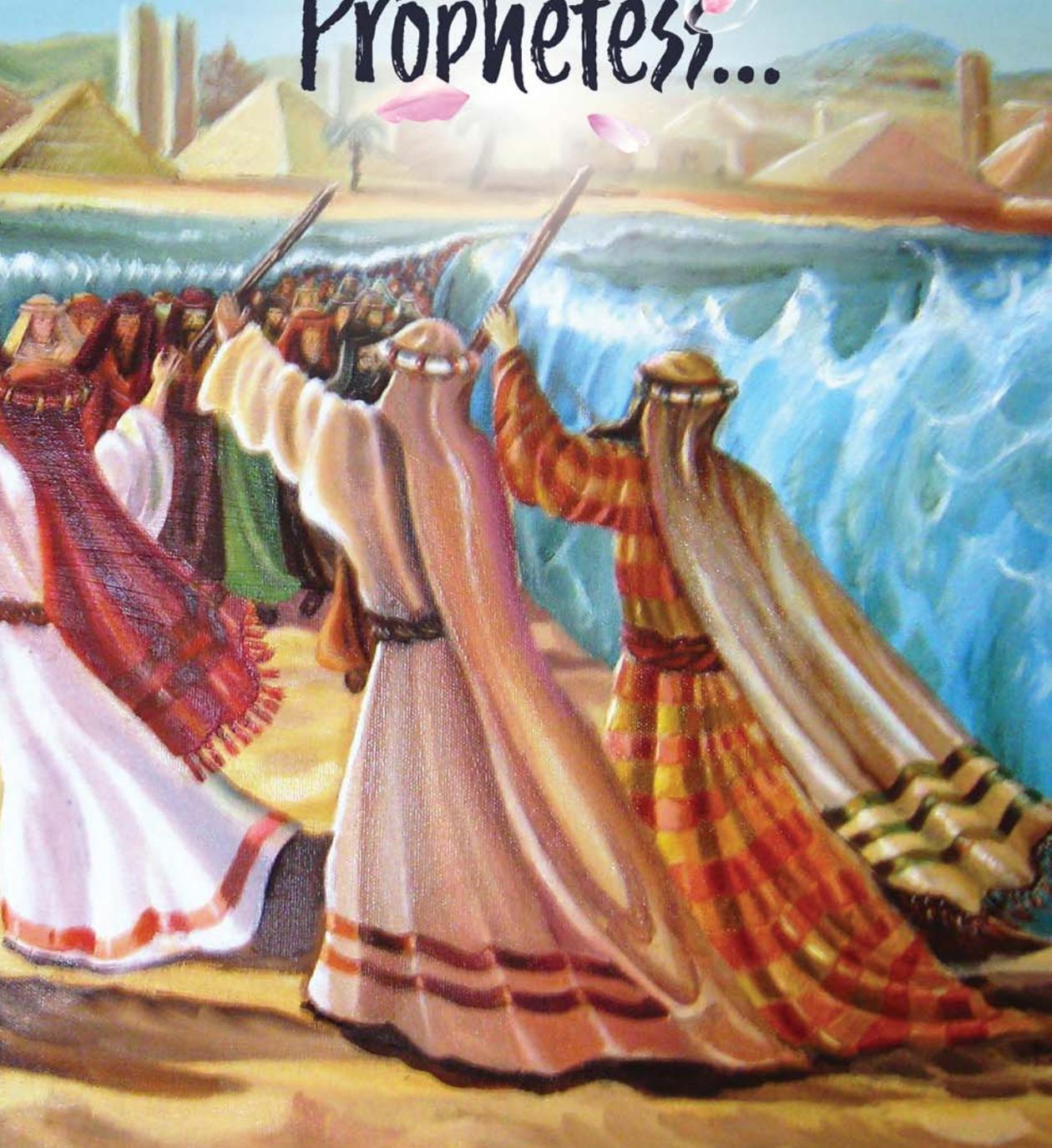
“Okay, Mommy...” (What a playful look he has in his eyes right now. What is he thinking about?)

“But maybe you could take down something good for me to eat from the top cabinet?”... ■

**An original biography of Miriam HaNeviah, based on
Chazal and the Midrashim, depicting a woman's
portrait in a generation of Redemption**



The 5-Year-Old Prophetess...



THE EXILE IN EGYPT. BNEI YISRAEL

worked at hard labor, exhausted and broken. Besides the strenuous physical exertion, the surrounding atmosphere was also intolerable. Worshipping the idol of the Nile River everywhere, even the wild animals have a place of honor.

Yet, the oppressed and enslaved people remained faithful to their Creator, neither despairing nor submitting. Confronted by the idolatrous teachings deeply rooted within the worship of Pharaoh and the Nile, they steadfastly preserved their Jewish identity. They kept their Jewish names, obviously different from the more fashionable names of those around them, they stringently wore uniquely modest attire, in contrast to the prominently opulent Egyptian clothes and their devotion to the physical body. They also wouldn't dare to change their native tongue – the language of their forefathers – for the Egyptian language. But not only that, this extraordinary nation was extremely blessed with being fruitful and multiplying. From one small family of a few dozen people, they were transformed into a nation of eight million, completely different from the people in whose midst they dwelled – and they would not assimilate in any form. Indeed, this nation posed an actual threat to Egypt.

The hard labor didn't help, nor did the decrees, “as much as they would afflict them, so did they multiply and so did they gain strength.” This resulted in the worst decree of all – killing the male children.

The leader of the generation was Amram ben Kehos, and when he saw how the evil Pharaoh had decreed to throw all the newborn boys into the river, he said, “We are toiling for

nothing.” He then decided to divorce his wife, Yocheved.

This was simply awful. If Amram, the leader and judge of Israel in that generation, was divorcing his wife, what would everyone else do? Answer? — They all divorced their wives as well.

As the decree of Pharaoh and his sorcerers was about to take effect, the existence of the Jewish People was in serious jeopardy. What would be with the coming generations and the status of the eternal nation of Israel?

In the midst of all this rises a small child, Miriam, the daughter of Amram and Yocheved, not yet five years old. Her greatness and fortitude will be revealed to their fullest as she matures, but what strength can such a young girl display now? Who will listen to her logical explanations? She approached her father and said with determination: “Father, your decree is harsher than Pharaoh, whereas Pharaoh issued a decree only against the males, yours is against the females as well. Besides, Pharaoh is a *rasha*, so it's doubtful whether his decree will be fulfilled, but you are a *tzaddik*, and your decree will definitely stand.” Amram looked at his young daughter and knew that the Shechina was making these arguments directly from her throat. Amram immediately took his wife back – not in secret, but publicly he married her for a second time. Once again, when the entire generation heard this, they all took back their wives.

Not long afterwards, the home of Amram and Yocheved was filled with light, a pure and flawless child, the sun of the deliverer of Israel was shining. The infant Moshe had been born.

Young Miriam was right – Pharaoh is evil, the power of impurity, and it's doubtful whether his edict will be fulfilled. Whereas, the Jewish



strength, the soul of every Jewish child, doesn't depend upon the limitations of the environment, its decrees, nor is it even influenced by the air of impurity and the strange teachings from its surroundings.

A SMALL BASKET IN THE BIG RIVER

The joy in the home of Amram did not last very long. The concern was great, as everyone knew that Yocheved had to give birth, and soon the Egyptian taskmasters would come and demand the child. The parents couldn't hide him much longer. Yocheved, the beloved midwife, who found every way possible to save children born to Jewish women despite the cruel edict, felt totally helpless. She sadly placed her infant son in a basket made of reeds, sending it along the edge of the River Nile, the source of idol worship in Egypt. The Nile was wide and broad, surrounded by a wall of thick reeds. But how long could the basket remain concealed from watchful eyes? How could the child exist without food?

The inner intent behind Pharaoh's decree was to assimilate the strength of the Jewish People within the logic of Egypt, with its source from the Nile, by casting Jewish children into the river and its spiritual impurities. The Nile was the source of Egypt's *avoda zara* since it was also the source of the Egyptians' livelihood, as it watered the entire land of Egypt, which had no rainfall. Pharaoh wanted that the children of Israel should also see the Nile and its natural limitations – as the source of their livelihood and vitality. Thus, they will forget that Hashem, and He alone, provides nourishment and sustenance for all.

Even Pharaoh's sorcerers, who constantly kept their eyes focused on the birth of the deliverer of Israel, saw through their black magic that the source of their dread and anxiety had already been cast into the waters. As a result, when they informed the king that the redeemer of the Jewish People had been cast into the Nile, the decree was immediately annulled.

As for the half-sleeping infant, his basket slid slowly down the edge of the river into its main waterway, as if a struggle was now taking place between little Moshe, the symbol of holiness, purity, and redemption, and the broad Nile River, symbol of impurity and servitude. Now, the basket floated gently onto the waves, nullifying the decree against Jewish male children, and shortly thereafter, it moved in the direction of Pharaoh's daughter. Basya awoke that morning and felt a strong need to bathe in the river and cleanse herself from her father's idols. Thus, once she washed herself in the Nile, its idolatrous qualities were negated.

The infant was small, but his strength was infinite, the strength of the "faithful shepherd" of Israel, who already from the moment of his birth struggled with the proverbial "crocodile" crouching at the edge of the Nile, as he showed the Jewish People with spiritual faith and material plenty.

FAITH, TRUST, AND DETERMINATION

Standing from a distance, among the thickets of the bamboo reeds, stood a young girl feeling responsible for the fate of the infant child. She didn't let the basket disappear from her line of vision. She watched it closely, and in her heart was the faith and confidence that the miracle to save the baby would come. She didn't stand there to see the child's demise, rather she awaited her brother's miraculous salvation. Redemption qualities within a most special little girl.

Miriam stood ready for any eventuality that might require her involvement or assistance. Then, before her young eyes, the miracle took place, as Pharaoh's daughter heard an infant crying and had pity upon him. Basya sought to calm him, but her efforts were unsuccessful. She tried to call upon numerous Egyptian women to wet-nurse the baby, but he wouldn't take from them.

As for Miriam, this was the moment she had been waiting for, and the girl quickly went to Pharaoh's daughter and said, "Shall I go and call for you a nurse from the Hebrew women, so that she shall nurse the child for you?" A five-year-old girl during a period of evil life-threatening decrees turned to the distinguished Egyptian princess, surrounded by her handmaidens, who might reveal a cruelty comparable to her father Pharaoh and start asking questions. Yet, with sheer determination, she gave the princess some suggestions. She wasn't worried, she didn't hesitate, and she firmly and creatively saved her infant brother's life, making certain that he would have kosher food. She reduced the amount of time he suffered from hunger until Basya realized on her own that she had a find a Jewish wet-nurse.

This is the second time that the geula'dike child changed the face of destiny, and was remembered for the good as a result.

RAISING CHILDREN AT ANY PRICE

Miriam accompanied her mother Yocheved, the beloved midwife of the Jewish women in Egypt. Their role during these times was by no means simple. Apart from their being the midwives for the righteous women who gave birth despite Pharaoh's decree, they continued to support them even though they didn't know what the child's fate would be, whether he would live at all. They hid the newborn children any way they could, tending to them with love and warmth, even continuing to raise and educate them at every opportunity. Yocheved and Miriam received special names alluding to their essential nature during that time - Shifra and Puah. "Shifra – because she beautified [*meshaperes*] the newborn infant; Puah – this was Miriam because she talked and cooed [*po'ah*] to the newborn infant in the manner of women who soothe a crying infant". Shifra and Puah complemented one another: Shifra sought to maintain and improve the child's physical health, proper nutrition, protection against

the elements (excessive cold and heat), while Puah's was to provide emotional warmth and love, calm him when he's crying, gently and pleasantly illuminating his soul.

Miriam became Puah: Miriam, because she was there during the bitter [*mar*] times of the difficult exile. Nevertheless, she proclaimed her prophecy that the redeemer of Israel would be born in the very near future.

As with Puah, Miriam's task didn't end with the birthstool, rather it continued afterwards. When the children grew up a little, she worked with tremendous self-sacrifice that they too should anticipate the long-awaited Redemption. She assembled all the children in Hashem's army, who would soon see G-dliness by the sea, encouraging them to believe that they will indeed bear witness to the imminent Redemption and they should be ready for the moment of truth when they would say, "This is my G-d and I will glorify Him." During the time when it seemed dark and distant, she instilled within the children a strong sense of faith in the fulfillment of the Redemption.

A TAMBOURINE WORKSHOP FOR THE WOMEN OF EGYPT

The rumor spread by word of mouth throughout the land of Goshen. Women and girls were invited to the home of Miriam the prophetess, where a special gathering would be held. At the height of the growing difficulties and royal decrees, not to mention the increasing physical labor, the situation seemed to be getting only worse. And Miriam? She believed in her brother Moshe, who came to announce to the Jewish People, "G-d will surely remember you." However, since Moshe had been gone for several years, no one knew where he was, but Miriam remained certain, although everything around looked dark. Things seemed to be the exact opposite of the Redemption they were longing for, and the people were no longer confident that it would come to pass. Then,

suddenly, in the midst of all this uncertainty, Miriam gathered the women and informed them that they should prepare tambourines.

Why tambourines? This place doesn't provide many opportunities for joy. Miriam declared: This is for the moment when we will leave Egypt! We will use them to offer our thanks and praise to Alm-ghty G-d. The women looked heavenward and whispered 'Amen' with great intensity. They closed their eyes for the moment and could only imagine the time of the Redemption when Moshe, the man of G-d, would suddenly return after so many years since he disappeared, the moment when millions of Jews would be freed from their exile. However, a split second later, when they opened their eyes and again saw the darkness around them, heard the cries of the Egyptian taskmasters and the groans of the Jews toiling at hard labor, they suddenly remembered how Egypt was a tightly closed fortress, from where no slave had ever escaped, and especially not an entire nation with elderly people, women, and children. They gave a heavy sigh and took their tambourines in hand, bearing both their tremendous hardships on the one hand, and the burning faith in their eventual freedom on the other.

They returned slowly to their homes, concealing their precious instrument, a symbol of their rare and steadfast belief with every passing year, with every new edict placed upon their heads. Faith continued to grow with even greater intensity, and in the merit of their faith, the righteous women would finally reach the great moment of Geula.

THE SONG OF MIRIAM

When the moment of truth came and the sound of jingling tambourines was suddenly heard on the seashore, no one understood where it was coming from, until they saw the prophetess Miriam with musical instruments in her hands. And how did they suddenly get there? But wait, it wasn't just her. Many wom-



en gathered around, and out of their satchels they too pulled out the tambourines they had prepared earlier. Now, it was fitting for them to sing to and thank Hashem. They knew this all the time.

Miriam took a tambourine in her hand, and all the women came out after her with tambourines and with dances. And Miriam called out to them: Sing to Hashem, for very exalted is He.

The Rebbe explains that when they finally rid themselves of Pharaoh, the joy of women was far greater than the joy of the men, since the mothers had “endured” the decree far more than the fathers.

Along the sea, two songs were sung – the song of the men and the song of the women, and the latter was more fervent because it was made with tambourines and dancing. They were all equipped and prepared in advance, and their joy was greater. Everything depended upon them.

As it was then, so too today. The Rebbe MHTM explains that it was specifically the woman who fought against Pharaoh, deviously concealed as he is. She battles Pharaoh as he garbs himself in new disguises, upgraded for our generation. The Rebbe has much appreciation for our role since for a sizable portion of the day, the head of the household is not home. And even when he is home, he isn’t as devoted to the children’s education as the woman is. Furthermore, the Rebbe promised that when the woman acts with pure devotion without being affected by Pharaoh and his decrees, it is then assured that she will be victorious, thereby establishing that G-d is indeed most exalted, especially when we fulfill our task with joy.

THE WELL OF MIRIAM

Then, in the wilderness, a barren and desolate place of snakes and scorpions, an entire nation walked for a period of forty years. According to the ways of nature, there was no possibility that there would be any food or water, and there surely wouldn’t be any rain.

However, the nation is not worried about food descending from Heaven in Moshe's merit, not worried about the climate and environment in the merit of the clouds of glory that came to them through Aharon, nor about drinking water since during this entire time, there was the well that accompanied them everywhere – in the merit of Miriam.

The entire people drank their fill from the well's pure waters known for its wondrous qualities – the water would heal the sick and do all sorts of good things for those who drank or bathed in it... What was more important? It's really hard to say. However, water has two significant tasks: quenching one's thirst and making it possible for food to be digested properly by softening it and moving it throughout all the cells of the body.

The Rebbe teaches something marvelous from this for Jewish women in all generations: It's true that the husband, the head of the household, determines the overall approach regarding how conduct should be at home in accordance with Shulchan Aruch. However, the *akeres ha'bayis*, she is the one who draws this down into the home's every detail, similar to the water that moves the food throughout the whole body. She is the one who softens the *halachos* of the Torah and the teachings of Moshe and Aharon, the leaders of Israel, instilling them in a way that the children can properly digest and become a part of their blood.

And during the fortieth year, Miriam died... Then, the well stopped and the congregation had no water. Everyone now realized that the well had been in Miriam's merit, and there was a need for a special command to Moshe and Aharon to continue the well's operation.

The merit of a woman who encourages life, whether in Egypt or in the wilderness.

HER HISTALKUS

In the fortieth year since the Exodus from Egypt, in the month of Redemption, on the

tenth of Nissan, Miriam passed away. The great prophetess who constantly accompanied them closed her eyes and returned her soul to her Maker in the bond of life. The entire nation wept for her, and the well ceased. While the sun set at that moment, it left its indelible mark upon the story of the first Redemption with a valued instruction for generations to come.

Miriam was privileged to be bound with such a close connection to the Redemption that the Midrash states, "Redeemer – this is Miriam, named after the *mirur* (bitterness), as in her merit, they were redeemed from the decree of 'And they were embittered.'" Miriam was also privileged that Moshiach, the first Redeemer who is the final Redeemer – is a descendant of Miriam, ancestress of Dovid HaMelech.

Miriam passed away on the tenth of Nissan, the same date of the miracle of "Who smote the Egyptians with their firstborn." Chazal didn't set the day of remembrance for the miracle of slaying the firstborn of Egypt on the day of Miriam's passing because the action done through remembering the miracle had already been achieved when Miriam passed away since the death of *tzaddikim* atones. Therefore, the remembrance for the miracle was set on Shabbos HaGadol.

In the merit of the righteous women in that generation, the Jewish People were redeemed from Egypt, and in the merit of the righteous women in our generation, we will be redeemed.

We can sense the prominent similarities between the strength and power needed then and our generation, the generation of the Redemption. Let's take this might and strength, and we'll illuminate ourselves, our homes, and our environment with uncompromising faith, and we will march with determination to the Redemption, the women and girls of the seventh generation! ■



*Machon
Chana's
Unforgettable
Dorm Mother:*

**Mrs. Gita
Gansburg**

I would see her around in Crown Heights, usually accompanied by her daughter, Nechama Chanin. Tall, erect, serious. I knew that she was the housemother at Machon Chana but not much more than that. Then I wrote a magazine piece she read... • By Tami Holtzman



I FIRST MET MRS. GITA GANSBURG

a”h a few years ago. Until then, I would see her in Crown Heights, usually accompanied by her daughter, Nechama Chanin. Tall, erect, serious. I knew that she was the housemother at Machon Chana but not much more than that.

At the time, I submitted a short piece to the publication *B'toch Ha'mishpacha*, which was printed as the lead editorial. I told about my young children and how hard it was for them every Pesach when they saw their friends enjoying kosher l’Pesach treats. I wrote about the deal that I made with them to compensate them, that they could buy extra treats after Yom Tov, and how they took the money I gave them and bought me flowers for Shabbos instead of buying themselves nosh.

This little incident generated a lot of positive feedback and it seems that Mrs. Gansburg read it too. I met her on the Shabbos before Shavuos at the annual N’shei Chabad convention that takes place at that time, on Shabbos Mevarchim Sivan. She was there, leaning on her daughter’s arm, when they both stopped me and said, “We didn’t know you know how to write!”

Mrs. Gansburg wasn’t the type to offer empty flattery. She was a very practical person who did not waste her words.

She was looking for someone to write a book. Her departed husband, the Chassid, R’ Itchke, was a most colorful character. He was an ardent Chassid, in the front lines to carry out anything the Rebbe said. He led an interesting life, full of exciting projects, and had many delightful and exciting anecdotes to tell. He devoted everything he did toward

one goal, helping the Rebbe in his efforts to bring Moshiach.

At a certain point, toward the end of his life, R’ Itchke decided to write his memoirs. He got R’ Avrohom Rainitz, a talented writer and editor, to spend weeks and months with him, listening to his life story, and then Rainitz published it in a book called *Chayal B’Sheirut HaRebbe*. The book tells in detail about his life, the upheavals he experienced, the places he lived, the people he met, and his adventures, all for the purpose of carrying out the orders of the leader of the generation.

However, shortly after the book was published, R’ Itchke passed away, and thus, only half of his life’s story was published. Mrs. Gansbourg, a loyal soldier herself, felt that his life’s project wasn’t complete if part two wasn’t written. She asked Rainitz to continue with a second volume but he wasn’t available to do so. So Mrs. Gansbourg began searching for someone else to do the work.

That little sweet thing my children did on Isru Chag of that Pesach, led to my writing my first book (although it still hasn’t been published for various reasons).

We would meet once a week in her apartment at Machon Chana and sit in her pink and gray old kitchen where she regaled me with the story of her incredible life.

WIFE OF A SOLDIER

R’ Itchke Gansbourg was a high energy person. When it came to matters of the Rebbe, he was unwilling to listen to any reasoning whatsoever. If the Rebbe said to do something, that was it, even if it meant the seeming impossible. In later years, when the Rebbe encouraged the singing of Yechi, R’



GITA'S HUSBAND, R' ITCHKE, PASSING BY THE REBBE

Itchke publicized the Besuras HaGeula and the identity of Moshiach with the same firmness and fervor.

He was the one who started Mivtza Tefillin as we know it today. When the Rebbe announced the campaign, for the protection of soldiers, Chassidim were hesitant. How were they supposed to convince bareheaded men to put on tefillin? Were they supposed to talk to them first? Make house calls? Distribute brochures about it?

R' Itchke did not delay. He took a table, set it up at the Kosel, brought some pairs of tefillin, and began putting tefillin on with people. That is how the campaign took on the present form.

When the Rebbe announced the Shabbos candle lighting campaign, R' Itchke brought a truck, some tables, boxes of candles, and personally went to fetch the women of Kfar

Chabad who were in their kitchens getting ready for Shabbos, out on a busy Friday. Mrs. Perele Brod remembers yelling at him, "What about my kugel?"

He replied, "I don't care if you don't have kugel; there will be more women who light Shabbos candles!"

That was R' Itchke. Decisive, assertive, practical enough to think up ideas and enthusiastic enough to include all the skeptics in the successful implementation.

THE GOAL WHICH UNITED OPPOSITES

Gita Gansburg was the polar opposite of her husband. She was quiet, deliberate, and it wasn't in her nature to do things impulsively. One would think they were not a match, but there was something which made the impossible union one that endured. R' Itchke and

Gita were people with a goal: to accept and carry out the teachings of Chassidus and the Rebbe's orders.

This goal made their differences in personality very much beside the point. Gita put her doubts aside. Whenever her husband undertook a project, she helped him. Without her help, it seems unlikely that he would have been as successful in most of his efforts.

BUILDING FROM SCRATCH

Gita was the daughter of the Chassid, R' Refael Nachman (Fole) Kahan. Her father was a loyal Chassid who was arrested by the Soviets and sent to Siberia. She was the sister of R' Yoel Kahan, the principal chozer of the Rebbe's sichos and maamarim.

R' Itchke and Gita moved many times in their lives. After they married they lived in Tel Aviv. Then they moved to Taanachim where they founded the Chabad school, building it up, student by student, convincing parent after parent who needed convincing, and hiring staff and teachers, including my father, R' Eliezer Ziegelbaum a"h. They had to take care of the staff and the students, find a location, design a curriculum, and it was all very far from the center of the country, in the midst of the wilderness.

From Taanachim they moved to Holon. The Chabad school there today is also to their credit. They started there in a hostile environment where there already was a school, in a building which was unfinished, in tin shacks, moving to apartments without heat while dealing with the Education Ministry which refused to help.

R' Itchke put up the tin shacks, knowing how much public protest it would engender. He had a Jewish kup, full of ideas. Indeed, thanks to the tin shacks and enlisting the media to his aid, a building that until then they hadn't known existed suddenly became available.

SHOCK VALUE

Over the years, he launched a number of unique hafatza exhibits with which his wife and daughters helped him. This is how R' Itchke described it:

"Back in the days, when the approach to the Kosel was still blocked and the Kosel was in our enemies' hands, thousands of people would show up on the three regalim and would look longingly toward the Temple Mount.

"R' Yosef Marton put together a Jewish-Chassidic exhibit, the first of its kind I think since the inception of the Chassidic movement. The exhibit was on Har Tziyon on Chol HaMoed Sukkos and was intended to attract thousands of people.

"I was asked to help set it up. Since Hashem blessed me with an *eishes chayil* and talented daughters, I enlisted them to the creative effort.

"I did not know at the time that this exhibit would be the first in a series of many that would follow, and that exhibits would become an inseparable part of my life so that I would become known as the person who puts together exhibits.

"I think this was the first time that Jewish concepts were presented to the public in a hands-on and visual way. We set up pictures of the Rebbeim alongside the sifrei Chassidus that they wrote and pictures of the Rebbe MH" M at farbrengens and at events around the year. All this was accompanied by large placards and they were surrounded by beautifully designed Judaica creations.

"My family's job was to help with the actual setting up of the exhibit together with bachurim from Yeshivas Toras Emes. My daughters are talented in arts and crafts which was very helpful in preparing the displays. Since we were pressured for time, with Chol HaMoed around the corner, the eve of the holy day of Yom Kippur was dedicated toward building the

exhibit. My wife Gita and her sister Freida and my daughters were all involved and in timely fashion we left Kfar Chabad for Yerushalayim. R' Yosef was in charge and we did as he told us.

“It is a mitzva to eat more on Erev Yom Kippur but we did not get to eat extra that day. Time was pressing and we made our way back to the Kfar by taxi since the buses had stopped running hours before. The taxi trip was expensive and of course we did not have kreplach. We did Kaparos on the way, using money.

“The exhibit opened on Chol HaMoed Sukkos 5724/1963 and thank G-d it was successful. It lasted several weeks. This was our first foray into exhibit construction and we realized what a powerful impact it makes. This was the impetus for the exhibits that followed.”

IT WILL BE OKAY

The following is an excerpt from the book which tells about arranging a Pesach seder for the community in Natzrat Illit which was the next stop for R' Itchke and Gita:

“We hadn't rested up from the work of the exhibit and were busy with work again. We decided to run a public Seder. The local immigrants from Russia and Romania did not know much about Pesach and we had to teach them the most basic details. Mrs. Fruma Teichtel, one of the teachers in our school, volunteered to help me with running the massive organizational logistics.

“We advertised all over the city and announced the sale of tickets at a nominal price. We paid for a caterer but even in our rosiest dreams we did not imagine how successful it would turn out.

“The hall where the Seder took place, the biggest in town, was full. At a certain point, we began removing unnecessary furnishings to make more room and people didn't stop coming. Even that wasn't enough. In the end, sad to say, there were people who couldn't come in.

// R' ITCHKE AND GITA
MOVED MANY TIMES IN
THEIR LIVES. AFTER THEY
MARRIED THEY LIVED IN TEL
AVIV. THEN THEY MOVED TO
TAANACHIM WHERE THEY
FOUNDED THE CHABAD
SCHOOL, BUILDING IT UP,
STUDENT BY STUDENT.

In particular, I remember a father and daughter who begged to be allowed in but you couldn't get even a pin into that room. Until today, we feel bad about that father and daughter.

“I was born in Russia and remembered a few Russian words but I couldn't hold a conversation in that language. When my parents arrived in Eretz Yisrael, they decided to banish the Russian language from our home. They went so far that if someone accidentally blurted out a Russian word, he had to put a coin in the pushka. Since we didn't have many coins, we had to be very careful with what we said. After some effort, Yiddish and Hebrew became the languages used in our home and Russian was slowly forgotten.

“The people there that night did not know Hebrew and I had to run the Seder. I prepared a list of key words in Russian and hand movements filled in the blanks and we managed very well.

“The attendees did not realize that we, the organizers, were sitting with everyone but a bit separate and were keeping all the stringent customs of kashrus that we were used to from

home. Mrs. Teichtel and Mrs. Yaffa Lipsker, along with my wife, did the cooking for us.

“I sang the Pesach songs in Russian, ‘*Who Knows One*,’ and the other classic Seder songs, and of course ‘*Nyet, Nyet*,’ that oldie but goodie. They didn’t know the words well, but ‘*Who Knows One*’ we managed to sing altogether. It was heartwarming to see these simple, good Jews of the Baal Shem Tov, making such efforts to come close to Hashem.

After eating, the guests left and only we, the organizers, remained and had the seder to ourselves.”

R' ITCHKE SHOWING SHAZAR ONE OF THE DISPLAYS AT THE EXHIBIT



Gita’s daughter, Freidy Brod, tells of a public Seder that they organized in Kfar Chabad:

“The Six Day War and the great victories had left their impression on me, but the war also left Russian families with widows and orphans. I would like to describe, from my perspective, some of my memories of those days.

“My father made a decision, and my mother supported the idea, and the dream became reality on Erev Pesach 5728/1968. We were going to celebrate Pesach in Beit Shazar (which had already been built but had not been open for use yet) in a joint Seder for the families of war

heroes. In addition, a few families from Kfar Chabad who hosted them for sleeping were also invited, in order to lend it an authentic, Chabad flavor. The families promised to join, but each of them had various stringencies and hiddurim regarding the food. So my parents decided to do the cooking and to oversee all the details, according to all the stringencies of each of the participating families - no sugar, cooked sugar, only olive oil, no oil - just schmaltz, and so on. Huge pots were bought to supply food for the hundreds of guests who promised to attend.

“Today, every Lubavitcher child is familiar with the concept of public sederim, but back then it was something novel and

completely foreign. This was also the first year that we did not celebrate the Seder at the home of my Aunt Freida, together with my grandparents. Rather, we walked to Beit Shazar and even I knew that I was expected to host and be fully involved. Is there any greater chinuch than that?

“When I talk about that night, I must tell you about one of the most meaningful experiences we had that Erev Pesach.

“Shortly before Pesach, someone called us and asked that even though he and his wife were not in the category of ‘widows and orphans,’ since their only son had been killed in the war, and this son had run their Seder, they wanted to join us.

“This wasn’t easy to accede to since many families in the Kfar were already hosting and it was hard to find another family to agree to have them. But that is not something that would deter someone like my father. He told the man, who introduced himself as Mr. Gilon, that he and my mother would be happy to host them in our house.

“I already mentioned that my parents cooked and prepared the Seder themselves with the help of Mrs. Rochel Levin. When the Gilon couple came to our house, my parents were still at Beit Shazar involved in the preparations. My sister welcomed them and apologized on behalf of our parents. After serving them a drink and some Pesachdik potato kugel, they waited for their hosts to arrive.

“My parents came in shortly afterward and my father went to shake the hand of the guest when he suddenly turned pale. ‘You are Gilon?’ he asked. ‘You aren’t Gilon; you are Goldstein!’ And without us kids understanding what was going on, they fell into each other’s arms. My father said the Shehechyanu blessing.

“It turned out that during the War of Independence, when my father was a soldier, his unit was once surrounded by Arabs. An

announcement was made on the megaphone: Everyone run! My father’s foot was injured from shrapnel, which later earned him the designation of ‘Metzuyan Tzahal,’ and he lost a lot of blood. He could not move but when he heard the order he took an undershirt, banded his foot, and began to run in the opposite direction of the shooting.

“After a few kilometers, he and two friends reached a crossroads. They did not know which way to go and with great apprehension they split up in three directions. My father chose the right, as a Chassid would. With a wave of a white handkerchief he dragged himself along with difficulty until he came upon a flickering light. He was very grateful to Hashem for leading him to safety.

“He never saw his friend again and did not know what had happened to him. He was unable to locate him and persistent rumors said he was killed.

“That Pesach in our house, with his friend standing there alive and well in front of him, we saw the wonders of divine providence.”

FAMILY TRAVELS

When they lived in Natzrat, R’ Itchke had a severe heart attack which had them rethinking what to do next, because the work he had done until that point was too much for a person with heart disease.

The following excerpt describes the reasons for the move to America, which ultimately resulted in the couple becoming the house parents at Machon Chana:

“After I had to leave Natzrat because of the heart attack I had, we went back to live in our house in Kfar Chabad. As always, we asked the Rebbe what our next step should be. The Rebbe told us to consult with the Reshet.

“The heads of the Reshet had a new job for me, to open a new school, this time in Ohr

Yehuda. Ohr Yehuda is ten minutes away from Kfar Chabad, near Ben Gurion airport.

“I got to work with my usual zeal. I put together a staff and we began the school with grades one and two. We taught the students reading and writing and then had a Siddur party.

“But things in Ohr Yehuda did not proceed as usual. The pace was not what I was used to. This time, the work did not provide me with the joy and satisfaction that I wanted. I felt that no progress was being made, as though I was on a treadmill. Maybe it was because of my health which deteriorated since my heart attack or maybe because of the situation in that area.

“The population in Ohr Yehuda consisted primarily of people down on their luck. The poverty caused many of the youth to turn to paths that were not always legal. Bitterness and poverty reigned. Those who brought pride to their families were drafted into the army and became ‘know-it-alls,’ and this knowledge usually consisted of ‘religious matters are a waste of time.’ Thus, many people refused to cooperate with us. Some of our students were influenced by their brothers’ views and left.

“I felt down. Then, heaven directed me to something new which impacted the rest of my life and my family’s life. The lack of success in Ohr Yehuda was, like everything else, for G-dly reasons, but then, due to the narrow intellect of the human being, I still didn’t know this.

“At that time, the Rebbe’s shliach in Argentina, R’ Berel Baumgarten, whom I knew, came to visit Eretz Yisrael. He met me and I felt the sudden need to pour out my heart about my troubles in Ohr Yehuda and my depressed state. R’ Baumgarten, seeing how dissatisfied I was, said, ‘Why don’t you come to us in Argentina where we can accomplish a lot with your energy and talents?’

“R’ Baumgarten didn’t just offer empty words. He sat and thought it through and

presented me with a detailed plan. He wanted me to run the school for half a day within the teacher exchange program run by the Education Ministry in cooperation with the Jewish Agency and with a salary paid by them. In the afternoon, I would be busy with Chabad activities which sometimes would include shechita and mila!

“Shechita and mila? Who me?

“But why not? We had done mitzvaim, and opened and strengthened schools, exhibits too. We also held successful concerts, so why not shechita and mila?

“My wife was not particularly enamored of the new idea. It was a bit daring, I must concede, but a Chassidite like my *eishes chayil* would never oppose spreading the wellsprings after we received the Rebbe’s consent and blessing.

“And so, every afternoon, after we finished school in Ohr Yehuda, I began preparing for the new project. I went to learn shechita and mila from R’ Chaim Marinovsky a”h. Ah yes, and Spanish too. You can’t work with people without knowing some words in their language, right?

“We began packing up our house so we could ship our belongings to Argentina. In the meantime, in America, our daughter Chani gave birth to a boy and we very much wanted to participate in the bris of our grandson who was named Shmuel.

“We asked the Jewish Agency to make a small change in our itinerary and to have us travel with a stop in the US for a few weeks. We offered to pay the difference in price and they agreed.

“We made the trip to America while our belongings made their way by ship to Argentina. Only one detail remained to take care of and that was our visas for Argentina. We submitted our request and waited in America for the visas.

We enjoyed our grandson and gathered our strength for our upcoming mission.

“There is a saying in Yiddish, ‘a man plans and G-d laughs.’ G-d’s ways are mysterious. While we were waiting, a huge financial fraud was discovered at Bank Leumi in Argentina. I don’t remember the details, but with this discovery, the government was furious with anything Israeli. The Argentinians, who felt betrayed, closed the doors of their country to Israelis, and this loyal servant and his faithful wife were among those Israelis, even though we had no connection whatsoever to Bank Leumi. So we were stuck in the US and had no idea when the doors would open again.

“Our stay with our daughter became longer and longer and the lack of information became a bit irritating. We could not return to Eretz Yisrael as our house in Kfar Chabad was already rented for the year. Our possessions were in Argentina and there was no longer any work in Eretz Yisrael.

“Whenever we asked the Rebbe we were told to ask the Jewish Agency who was responsible for sending us. The Agency’s people did not want to cancel the idea and asked us to wait. They promised that if we found work in America in the meantime, they would see to our getting work permits until things cleared up with Argentina.

“With no source of income, our money began to diminish and we did not know what to do. Then our son-in-law Zalman said, ‘Why not speak with JJ Hecht? He is well connected in all the right places. He can say you work for him.’

“I liked the idea and we spoke to R’ Hecht who immediately said he would like to help. We went to his office and while he started to fill out forms he suddenly looked up and his eyes shone like someone who has come up with a fabulous idea.

“‘Why don’t you really work for me? I need a couple who will live in Machon Chana and serve as house parents!’

“My wife and I looked at each other in surprise. After a moment I recovered and said, ‘The Rebbe said we should work along with the Jewish Agency!’

“That’s no problem. Before we realized what he was doing, he picked up the phone and began talking to someone in English, a language I had not learned yet.

“A few minutes later he put down the phone. ‘The matter is arranged with the Agency,’ he gaily announced.

“We looked at one another once again in confusion. Even I was not used to such on-the-spot decisive action.

“I ... I can’t do this without asking the Rebbe,’ I tried to protest.

“R’ Hecht pushed a paper and pen toward me and said ‘Take it and write.’

“But I have to go to the mikva first,’ I protested.

“‘The mikva is nearby,’ he said pointing out the window.

“What could I do? I immersed and came back while Gita waited for me in the office.

“We submitted the letter to the Rebbe’s office and headed toward our daughter’s house, while we were still trying to understand what had just happened.

“We had just arrived when our daughter was there, waiting for us on the porch, waving her hand. ‘You have an answer from the Rebbe.’

“The answer was positive and the next day, 6 Tishrei, when there was a farbrengen at Machon Chana to mark Rebbetzin Chana’s yahrtzeit, we were introduced by R’ Hecht as the new house parents, and we’ve been there ever since.” ■



*Rochel
Braun*

HOLY G-D!

BACK in my early twenties as a single girl I was working for a large Israeli company which had a shuttle service for company employees to the place of work. On the daily ride I became friendly with a very nice religious lady who was married with children. At some point the topic of davening came up, and she shared that she said her morning *brachos* by heart while taking care of sandwiches and getting children out the door to school. I politely refrained from revealing my shock at such sacrilegious behavior. You see, my mindset back then was still along the lines of “one day I’m going to grow up and when I do, I’m going to be perfect, and at that exalted point, I would never do something like that. No indeed, the perfect-me-at-an-undefined-point-in-the-hopefully-not-too-distant-future would never be guilty of such a shoddy attitude to my daily obligations!”

Fast forward to Rochel-with-the-blessings-of-hubby-and-children, and I remember my friend from way back. Oh my goodness! *Ha-levai* I would even know the *brachos* by heart!

Some of us are better at planning and getting things done. Back in my single days I once dormed with a girl who did not grow up with exposure to Torah and Mitzvos. She used to time her davening, and then she would add on a paragraph, knowing exactly how many minutes to allow in her schedule. I looked on

in admiration, but when Moshe Yess wrote his song about the Pesach blues, someone must have told him about my organizational challenges. Watching that girl was like watching someone perform brain surgery or flying to the moon. It’s important - it makes sense - but I’m not on that page...

Prayer is somewhat like creating music or other art forms, you need to be inspired or it doesn’t come out good...right? Actually it’s not that simple. My *mashpiah*, the Aibishter should give her long and healthy years with Moshiach Now, tried to persuade me that the Holy One Blessed be He actually WANTS my mumbled prayers with not-that-much concentration. It seemed to me that such prayer was inconsequential, like the chirping of birds... I didn’t buy the idea for years. Fast forward to when the children are B”H grown up and out of the house, and I still find it very challenging to daven regularly, but now I can try to learn a little Chassidus sometimes before davening to ‘grease the wheels’!

Whether the topic is prayer or another realm of your life that is challenging, the message is the same - keep on keeping on! One baby step in the right direction, and when you are used to that - take another. This message is relevant to many areas of our lives. This is the energy of *Netzach*.



YOU know the story about Rabbi Levi Yitzhak of Berditchov who greeted people in shul after they davened the *Shemoneh Esrei* and they couldn't understand why, since he had already greeted them when they arrived in shul? He explained that now that they had finished the prayer, they had returned from their business affairs, and it is a long way from the fair at Leipzig, so he was greeting them again...

Going back to the birds — I am always enchanted by the prayer that is said during the first twelve days of Nissan, with the *korbanos* of the *Nesiim*. Firstly, the 'recipe' for the sacrifice of each head-of-a-tribe is the EXACT same one. So what was all the excitement about? You see, when Nachshon son of Aminadav brings "one silver dish whose weight was a hundred and thirty shekels," it is a totally individual offering. It is not at all the same as when Nesanel the son of Tzuar brings it. Each of us gracefully catapults from the spiritual heights of our origins, down down down to this 'bira amikta', this earthly existence, with a different toolbox. One of us comes down to tighten a screw here, while another comes down to turn a wheel there. So when we each pick up that heavy silver bowl to bring to the house of G-d, it's a DIFFERENT offering, because it is carried by a unique messenger.

The second thing that enchants me about that prayer, is "that in your great kindness you will shine upon the holy souls that renew themselves as 'birds' and chirp and praise and pray on behalf of the holy people of Israel." Get that? Listen when you can, to the birds chirping - that could be a holy soul interceding for you! More than that...when YOU make a teeny tiny effort to pray (or do another mitzva which doesn't come easily to you) even if it isn't perfect, YOU are causing *nachas* to Hashem.

It says in the HaYom Yom for 22 Adar 1:

"A person should always be careful with the Mincha prayer." The word for careful is 'zahir'.

PESACH RECIPE: (IMITATION) BIRD-SEED QUICHE

Ingredients:

- A large butternut squash, peeled, rinsed, cut into chunks and boiled.
- 4 large eggs, one of which is beaten. Put a half of the beaten egg aside.
- 1 rounded teaspoon of course salt.
- 1 tablespoon of orange juice
- 1 teaspoon of lemon juice
- 1/2 a cup of ground nuts of your choice mixed with a little salt

Preheat oven to medium/high temperature

Process all the ingredients except for half of the beaten egg and the nuts, and place mixture into a greased pan or a pan lined with baking paper. Put mixture into the heated oven, remove after 10 or 15 minutes when a crust has begun to form, and spread the rest of the beaten egg over it. Sprinkle with the 'birdseed' - ground nuts, and return to the oven for an additional 40 minutes on a slightly lower temperature than before. Serve on the patio and listen for the birds!

This comes from the same root as 'to shine'. That's YOU, yes you! Whenever you learn a sentence of Torah, say a chapter of Tehillim or a section of the daily prayers, or do any mitzva sincerely, even though you consciously had to drag your thoughts away from mundane activities, and BECAUSE you had to, you are shining!



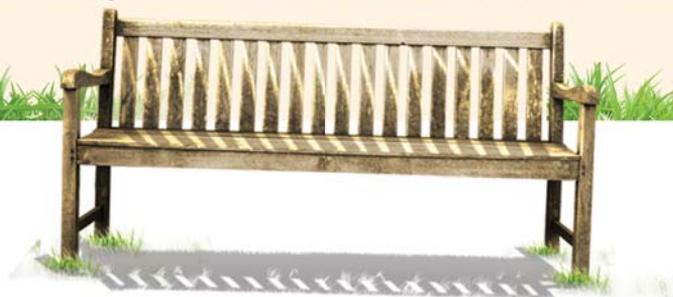
I will end with another reflection about davening. I always wondered - why

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Music “Downloads” From Heaven

Birds are “masters of song,” joining together daily in singing praises to Hashem. Her name too expresses her *shlichus* as an uplifting singer and songwriter. It is sheer brilliance that she is able to pack in numerous gems of Chassidus into her inspiring lyrics, awakening love of Hashem and a “geuladik” mindset. It’s about time you meet Yona Rivka Kimelman • Sara Gopin



WITH her gentle voice, she shares her story, “My first memory as a child of barely two was walking with my preschool class into the most beautiful structure that I’ve ever seen - a sukkah! As the brilliant sunshine streamed through the greenery, all the tots tried to reach the decorative fruits, squealing with joy. I did not see another sukkah until I was a college student in Rutgers’s University, and the devoted campus Shluchim, Rabbi Baruch and Sara Goodman, hosted me in their sukkah. It was in the warm embrace of their lovely sukkah that I flashed back to my first memory, frolicking in the sukkah in my earliest youth. As

our Rebbeim have taught us, the impressions of mitzvos on a child’s *neshama* are profound and everlasting.

“Most of my childhood I grew up in New Jersey. My family wasn’t observant, and I had the typical American Bat Mitzva, devoid of any spirituality. Without having any concept of Hashem, Torah, or mitzvos, I thought Judaism consisted of eating bagels, lox and cream cheese. I had never met any frum Jews with sincere beliefs until I met the Goodmans. One motzei Shabbos I walked into the Chabad House with my older brother Tzvi, just the way I usually dressed at the time (despite his

gentle admonitions), and I was immediately embraced as part of the family.”

Touched by their sincerity, and how they inconvenienced themselves on behalf of thousands of disaffected students, Yona Rivka found herself longing to be in their presence.

“On the surface, my future looked promising. I had received scholarships and was in the honors program. But I remember staring out of my dorm window and thinking, ‘Is there nothing greater to live for?’ I contrasted the emptiness of worldly pursuits with the deep sense of inner harmony I perceived in the Goodmans. How could I obtain this? Around this time Tzvi had begun to discover the beauty and relevance of Judaism, and I saw a positive transformation in him. This motivated me to explore my Jewish identity as well, and I agreed to accompany Sara Goodman to the Lubavitch Women’s Convention in Crown Heights in Sivan 5752. I stayed at the Machon Chana dorm and the entire experience was both overwhelming and yet sublime.

“Six months later I attended the Bais Chana Winter Program, and my soul soaked in everything. Although I still did not know a great deal quantitatively after those three precious weeks, I did know that the Torah is absolutely true, and that I’d never have any doubts as to this. I tried to convey to my parents the deep joy and truth I’d discovered in our heritage, but was crushed to hear their fears that I’d entered a cult r”!! Nothing I said could convince them otherwise, and I understood that this was a journey I’d have to make on my own. But I’ve never given up on them, and I observe with wonder how my songs have begun to make a dent in their armor!”

OVERNIGHT SHLIACH

“On the advice of my dear shluchim, I returned to college for a year and a half in order to finish a dual degree in psychology and in



Yona Rivka’s **Pretty in Pink Pesach Punch** for those who avoid processed drinks:

- 2-3 quarts of water
- 1-2 cups of grape juice
- 2 peeled and sliced oranges
- 2 peeled and sliced lemons and/or limes

Combine, chill a few hours, and enjoy! This looks pretty in a glass pitcher, and can be prepared on Yom Tov. (Just make sure that your *kavana* is to flavor the water and not to dye it pink!) L’chaim to Moshiach!

French. But I always like to say that I majored in Chabad House! From the moment I woke up there were endless opportunities to sanctify Hashem, and I became a shlucha virtually overnight. Rabbi Goodman put me in charge of his weekly Hebrew school, which was a smart move as it ensured that I would be learning as well! I threw my heart and soul into preparing lessons that would awaken those precious *ne-shamas*, always including a heartwarming song in English by Journeys, Destiny or Megama (Moshe Yess, ob”m).

“In between college studies, I spent two glorious summers in Machon Alte, tucked in

the mystical hills of Tzfas. After graduating, I delighted in learning in Machon Chana for two incredibly rich years, basking in the light of the Rebbe's teachings — *Toraso Shel Moshiach*. I doubt there was anyone in the world who was happier and more content than I was then. Straight out of the loving embrace of my Machon Chana home, I was blessed to marry my husband, Yaron Kimelman.”

Yona Rivka's emotions escalate as she continues, “I merited to see the Rebbe MH”M for the first time on Simchas Torah 5753. The Rebbe would appear briefly on the balcony of 770, and the entire shul reverberated with ‘Yechi’ for hours. After a wonderful Yom Tov, I was about to leave Crown Heights when suddenly a car whizzed by announcing a yechidus for visitors! I immediately followed the winding path of neshamas waiting to pass beneath their Shepherd's staff, and my only prayer was to be counted as one of his sheep. After a short while I found myself facing the holy and radiant countenance of the Rebbe. In the presence of such a G-dly person, the presence of Hashem in this world was now fully apparent.

“I felt that the Rebbe knew everything about me, and yet at the same time loved me and believed in me completely. As I stepped away, I felt a powerful wind going through me which took my breath away! This brief interaction with the Rebbe had the effect of immediately and palpably turning on the power switch to the *yechida* of my neshama, an experience so lofty that it left me totally speechless.”

DISCOVERING MY MUSICAL TALENT

Yona Rivka was raising her young children and expecting her sixth child when a serious ailment threw her into a tailspin. “I was losing my mobility and could barely eat or drink and was misdiagnosed. On the brink of the next world, *chas v'Shalom*, the doctors finally diagnosed a flesh-eating infection with a devastating impact. I was immediately put into

an induced coma, while they considered amputating my leg as they fought to save my life.

“If I had ever doubted that Rebbetzin Chana n”e regarded me as her daughter, I was lovingly shown that this is utterly untrue. During the week that I was unconscious, I very clearly saw Rebbetzin Chana n”e walk around my hospital bed three times, drawing her protective influence around me.” Yona Rivka pauses wistfully, and adds, “It was during those three months of long and lonely nights in the hospital that I truly learned to daven, talking to Hashem like a little child, asking Him to hug me, heal me and give me hope. Baruch Hashem, I recovered swiftly and miraculously, and my new appreciation for life set the stage for my music.

“I had little formal music education other than playing recorder in my fourth-grade class. Scholastic achievement was always more important to me. The closest thing to singing lessons was being coached when I surprisingly received the leading role singing in our sixth-grade musical. I enjoyed singing, but I never thought of it as anything other than a pastime.

“When I began my spiritual journey, I found my brother's cassettes of soul-stirring Jewish music, which drew me in a powerful way to teshuva. I remember sitting on the sofa listening to moving ballads like ‘*Neshomele*,’ as well as the *Dveykus* albums. I didn't understand a word of the Hebrew lyrics, but was moved to tears by the exquisite beauty and depth that I sensed in those melodies. As I grew closer to Chabad, I discovered the breathtaking world of niggunim, those otherworldly compositions that retain the soul of their composers, beckoning those who sing and listen to join them in the loftiest heights.

“About four years ago, after the birth of my ninth child, I desperately needed to restore my energy and well-being. Yoga had helped me in the past as a gentle exercise that was compatible with my injuries. Yet at a certain point I began to sense a certain impurity within

its philosophy and movements. When I came across a very strong letter in which the Rebbe clearly stated that yoga is inextricably bound up with its underlying avoda zara, I immediately stopped the yoga class.

My energy levels plummeted drastically until one day I put myself on a regimen of the best whole food supplements that I could procure, in hopes of rescuing myself. The very next morning Hashem rewarded me with an unexpected bolt of energy that ignited my musical talent. Acknowledging the gift, I swiftly grabbed a pen and paper, sat on my porch and composed my first song! One song led to another, until I realized that this wasn't a fluke occurrence, but rather a new gift that Hashem had revealed within me after I'd given up yoga at the Rebbe's behest. At all hours of the day and night, lyrics and melodies of song after song would stream forth. It was like a 'download' from Heaven. But I never imagined that that I'd be the one singing them until a frum woman in town, who has a recording studio, encouraged me, 'You wrote those songs. Your heart is in them. No one else can sing your songs with the same passion as you do!'

"Writing my songs was the relatively easy part. I knew that I'd have to polish them and record them as professionally as possible in order to share this gift with others. After a lot of research, I finally purchased all of the equip-

ment necessary to record vocals at home, where I feel less pressured. Afterwards I send them off to an engineer who mixes and masters them with instrumental tracks. *Bezras Hashem* I'm working on releasing my first CD this year! Though I still don't fully grasp how this came to be my calling, I do feel strongly that, since it's a gift from the Rebbe, I want to utilize it to cultivate real, personal connection with Moshiach and Geula in every listener. I seek to carve out a sweet and direct path between the *neshama* of my listener and the subject of each song. Music imbued with Chassidic content has the advantage of being the 'short, short path,' from my own experience."

Yona Rivka concludes our interview, "Though I live in Chicago, 'Welcome Moshiach' has enabled me to work alongside some of the most amazing women in the world. Together we fan the flames of our Geula energy and passion. My dear friends have been incredibly supportive of my music journey, and we all encourage one another to use our talents to augment Moshiach and Geula consciousness. I'm so grateful that Hashem has enabled me to uplift others and draw them closer to Moshiach. **Yechi Adoneinu Moreinu V'Rabeinu Melech HaMoshiach L'Olam Vaed!**" ■

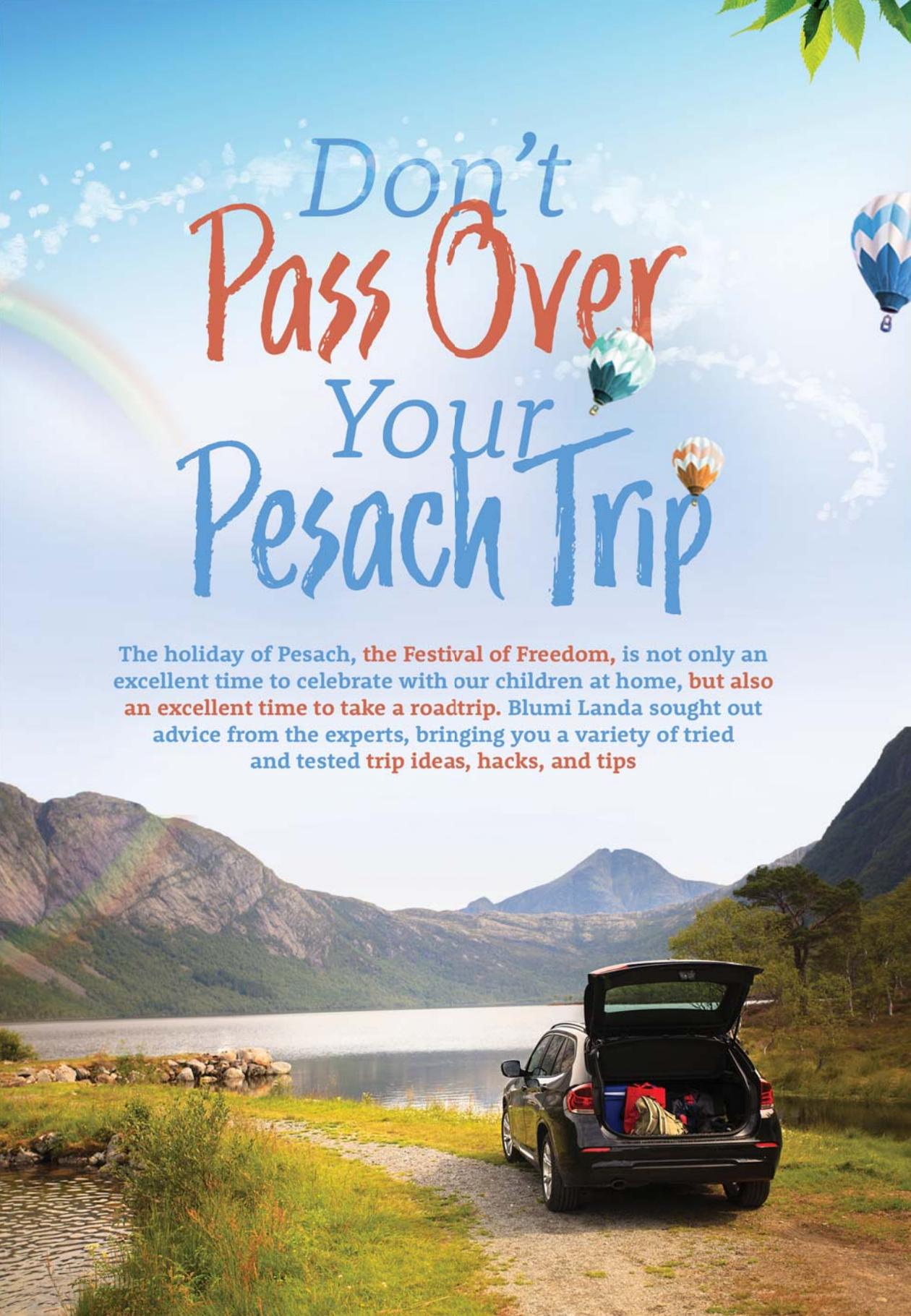
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ROCHEL BRAUN, CONT. FROM P. 25

does it say in the third blessing of the *Shemone Esrei* prayer, "*HaKeil haKadosh* — the Holy G-d." We KNOW that G-d is holy. What does this teach us about how to serve Him?

The commentaries explain that Hashem is "holy and separate". That made me feel bad. We are supposed to be getting closer to G-d when we pray. The more exalted He is, the further

away I feel. Wait... when we marry, the *chasan* says, "*Harei aht mekudeshes li* — Behold you are sanctified unto me". What happens then? Once the groom has sanctified — separated — his wife from the 'crowd' the couple then proceeds to build a home together. So when we refer to the Holy G-d - it is because we want to build a home together - speedily in our day!!! ■



Don't Pass Over Your Pesach Trip

The holiday of Pesach, **the Festival of Freedom**, is not only an excellent time to celebrate with our children at home, **but also an excellent time to take a roadtrip**. Blumi Landa sought out advice from the experts, bringing you a variety of tried and tested **trip ideas, hacks, and tips**

MY CHALLENGE WAS THIS:

How to plan a truly happy Chol HaMoed trip that will effectively maximize our family time? So

I first met with **Elisheva**, a mother of ten (*kein yirbu*) who kindly gave me some of her precious time when she was dealing with the usual Erev Pesach burden.

ELISHEVA — THE EXPERIENCED MOMMY

What are your Chol HaMoed plans?

I wait for Yom Tov and Chol HaMoed like a breath of fresh air. During the whole recent period, I worked as usual, whether there was a lockdown in place or not. Now, we're ready for a little quality time – '*Shehechyanu!*' I hope to utilize every moment cooking and taking trips with the children. May it be Hashem's Will that this should continue always...

Where will you be taking your trip this year?

We really love visiting nature sites near our home. We're not looking for attractions. I believe that many families this year will do as we will and lower their expectations. Densely populated areas are not relevant options anyway in some countries which still have various covid-related restrictions.

Look around you: In every city, there are walking paths, parks, streams. You don't need to go far. It would be appropriate to find the time even before Yom Tov to prepare a list of places to visit for your holiday trip. Get recommendations from friends who are more familiar with the area.

If you'll ask my children, what's most fun is to take a few apples and to go out to the nearby wooded area, only this time with a complete ensemble – the whole family, including our

bacuhrim and the older girls. Despite the age gaps, this creates unity among the siblings and makes the younger ones happy.

What is your go-to tip to our readers?

Healthy, tasty home-cooked foods provide a pleasant Yom Tov experience, lasting, with Hashem's help, until next Pesach and long afterwards. Don't forget to treat the children (or send the child to treat Tatty) with a cup of fresh-squeezed orange juice or a yummy fruit salad. But what's most important is to choose the child who will treat Mommy with a plate of shelled nuts and almonds!

Moreover, enjoy the family togetherness – the calm and personal attention. And please – without any pressure! Children don't like pressure and aren't built for it. Sometimes, parents take heavy tasks upon themselves during this time, and this just adds to the pressure on the home front. For example, davening in the morning with the children must be in an enjoyable and uplifting atmosphere in order that the child will want to take part. One possibility is to let a different child be responsible for davening each day. He davens out loud and gives out points (or nuts) at the end.

It's both possible and proper to use the trip to pay close attention to our children's emotional needs. If a child says, 'I don't like this trip', 'It isn't fun here?...', the parent might automatically reply: 'Why is Shmulik enjoying every moment and you're not?' or something like that. But don't do that. Be understanding and tell him something like, "We're already here, so lets try to have fun, and next time, *blineder*, we'll discuss what kind of trip works better for you."

It's also possible to delve into the matter and determine the real reason for the lack of enthusiasm and what the child's preferences

and hobbies are – all valuable information for the next trip...

RIVKY — THE TRIP PLANNER

While **Rivky** is officially a teacher, she is actually a tour guide. I spoke with her to get some tips and recommendations on how to plan a successful family trip and come back satisfied.

How do you start a good trip?

The spring weather during Pesach is perfect for taking trips, regardless of age. Until now, there were extremely cold days that drove us back into our homes, but now is the time. It's a good idea to plan the trip together with the children. The parents determine the things that are important to them, e.g., budget, location, etc., and it would be advisable to let the children decide what we should take with us and what kinds of games we should play along the way.

We should determine in advance what time we will be leaving, let the children know, and stick to the timetable. The time to leave should be set according to the plans for what we need to complete that morning.

Now some scheduling tips:

The main tasks that take time for us to do in the morning are getting dressed, davening, and eating a good and wholesome breakfast. If we want to set out on our journey by eight o'clock, this will apparently mean leaving before breakfast. As a result, we'll have to take fruit, vegetables, hard-boiled eggs, and perhaps even matzos. It can be a very pleasant experience to spread a mat on the ground and eat breakfast there. However, if we prefer to go out after breakfast, we should consider that to prepare food, eat, bench, and leave a clean house takes at least an hour, and for some families longer.

How do we leave for our trip?

As soon as we leave the house, everything goes easier and more smoothly. The house stays clean, and time passes quickly and most pleas-

antly. During Pesach, there is endless work to do in the kitchen. Therefore, my suggestion to you is to leave it and just go out. At home, the kids are already 'climbing the walls.'

A friend told me about a new phenomenon: her two-year-old child at home began climbing on the tables, the chairs, the computer, the kitchen cabinets – what not? 'What do you want?' I told her. 'You are confining an energetic child to a two and a-half room apartment, the length and breadth of which he has already squeezed down to the last drop. Now, he's begun to look for things to occupy him higher up...'

Sometimes, the moment of leaving the house drags out, and the delays create frustration and pressure. We suddenly remember more things we need to take; one child gets all dirty, another can't find his shoe... It can be most helpful if some of the children have already left the house and are waiting outside; this will spur on the others. We can tell the children that Tatty is going out now with whomever is ready to go, while Mommy will wait with those straggling behind. This works like magic; within a matter of seconds, everyone is ready. It's also possible to arrange to go out together with friends or cousins. This already 'upgrades' the trip experience a bit, and there's no longer a need for any additional attractions...'

What should we take with us?

If during the year we could just toss a few pitas, hummus, and some snacks into a knapsack, Pesach requires a bit more organization. However, with a little goodwill, this is definitely possible. Take a bag and fill it with all sorts of fruits and vegetables, nuts and a nutcracker, and hard-boiled eggs. Don't forget to bring a peeler and a knife (safely packaged), a garbage bag, a plastic tablecloth and a roll or two of paper towels. When going out to open-air nature reserves, there is a healthy appetite for healthy food. Make good use of this.



It would be appropriate to plan and organize for the trip the night before and also to get up early before the children. Preparing a salad for breakfast takes more time during Pesach. It is recommended to peel the night before a bowl of tomatoes and cucumbers for the next day. And potatoes, of course. How could we forget?"

SHIRA — THE PROGRAM DIRECTOR

Shira goes out on trips with her children all year round. However, Chol HaMoed Pesach is the crown jewel... I asked her to give us a few ideas for upgrading trips for us this year:

What turns a trip into a learning and unifying experience?

You can include content in every trip. We bring in advance a list of responsibilities and an appointment book. During a hiking trip, we make stops where each child encounters one of his siblings or parents to meet for a few minutes or to carry out some task. Possible tasks: telling a couple of jokes, writing a compliment to a sibling out of leaves or rocks, asking him what kind of trip he likes the most, giving him a prize from the natural surroundings.

Afterwards, we sit in some corner and take out a copy of the Beis Moshiah that we brought with us. Spread out the pages and each

one chooses a picture from the newspaper, and when it's his turn, he says how this picture is connected to Pesach or to some good character trait possessed by the sibling sitting near him...

On longer journeys, we make stops to refresh ourselves in unconventional locations, and we always enjoy spreading out a sheet facing the view, having something to eat, davening and singing out loud, even though no one can hear us...

If the drive gets a bit boring, we can count how many trucks were on the road, how many cows and sheep we've seen, how many colors of flowers we passed, what was the biggest and nicest looking house in the village we saw from our window... We can also play a kind of 'Pesach Alef-Beis' game. The parents can devise riddles in alphabetical order on concepts connected to the holiday, and the children can guess the word. Naturally, each riddle is devised according to age.



To each and every Jewish home this Pesach, I wish you the most geula'dike trip with your family on clouds of glory to the Beis HaMikdash! ■

“The Only Wrong Question Is the One Not Asked” —

Certified educators and counselors closely analyze the root cause of those challenging questions that children and teens don’t stop asking us and how we should deal with them

- **A Panel Discussion**
- **Yael Schneerson**

Why Do You Ask?



THERE’S a popular joke about a child who asked his father various questions. Yet, to every question the child asked, the father answered, “I don’t know.” After the same answer came time and time again, the child asked: ‘Father, perhaps you don’t want me to ask any more questions?’ The father replied: “Of course you should ask, my son. If you don’t ask, how will you know?”



FROM its very nature, the Pesach seder is dedicated to the questions of children, and as halacha says, we do things differently especially for “arousing the little ones’ inquisitiveness” — to encourage the children to ask questions. There’s a great deal that can

be learned here regarding the importance of asking questions and giving legitimacy to the questions of children. This importance even comes into expression during other areas of life.

The seder night is not the only time when our children ask questions. However, it may be the only time that we actually call for their questions. The questions are expected, and we even know how to answer them. “We were slaves to Pharaoh in Egypt”...

But our marvelous children don’t limit themselves to the seder night, nor to those questions for which Tatty and Mommy have ready answers. They are often experts in asking the most unexpected questions in the most unexpected places and at the most unexpected times. So, what do you do when you have

an extremely busy evening dealing with the endless trials of maneuvering between dinner time, showers, and putting the kids to bed, organizing the house back into some reasonable order, and the only thing you want is to get to the quiet after the storm (or at least before the next storm...), and then suddenly your child appears in his pajamas with just one question before bedtime: “Mommy, why didn’t Moshiaach come yet? I did so many mitzvos today...”

QUESTIONS ASKED BY YOUNG CHILDREN

“A child who ask questions is a healthy child,” says **Shevy Barak**, a kindergarten teacher and parenting counselor. “Asking questions is part of a child’s development. His curiosity in understanding the world around him, along with his verbal ability to express his question clearly, are very important stages of development.

“Therefore, it is most important that we shouldn’t suppress the asking of questions, even if children can sometimes really tire you out with their questions. However, if we try to see things the way they do, while many of them seem obvious to us, they aren’t as obvious in the eyes of the child. He learns about the world slowly, trying to understand what’s happening around him through those tools familiar to him, as long as we properly listen to his questions, pouring the answers into his small (or big...) mind, enabling him to feel more secure in a world filled with wonders. Thus, he will learn that most questions do have answers.

“And if there is no answer or the answer is too difficult for a child to understand? — We remember what they told us in our childhood: ‘When you grow older – you’ll understand...’ Even today, there are children to whom such words can be used in one form or another. And if they remain stubborn in their demand for an answer, we can explain to them that while their question is quite valid, they first need to learn more things before they can understand the answer. We can tell the child: ‘Hold on to your

question, and with Hashem’s help, after some more time, when I see that you can understand already – I’ll answer your question, *bli neder*.”

THE ONLY WRONG QUESTION IS THE ONE NOT ASKED

“What’s important is not to let the child feel that his question is superfluous or incorrect. We must show respect for every question a child asks. Give him the best possible feeling in order that he shouldn’t be afraid to ask things. However, it’s also true that we don’t always understand everything. We don’t always have an answer to every question they ask, and we can tell our children this as well. As long as we are in this galus filled with so many questions, there are certain questions that still remain unanswered.

“Even if our children sometimes ‘trip us up’ with challenging questions,” Shevy adds, “we must give some legitimacy to their questions, even to the fact that Mommy doesn’t know the answer. Maybe we should wait for Tatty, we’ll ask the rav, etc. It’s important that the child recognizes the appropriate ways to acquire information. It’s also important that he should know there are things that Tatty and Mommy ask someone else about to get answers.”

And what do you do with questions such as: “Why hasn’t Moshiaach come yet?” or “How can it be that Aunt Sara still hasn’t become a kallah? I’ve been davening a lot for her?”

Shevy suggests that we give the child a hug. Praise him for his question and explain that there are things we simply don’t understand. Hashem is our Father, He is King of the whole world, and He decides what will be and when. While we don’t always understand, we always need to know that absolutely everything is for the good. Even the Rebbe MH”M himself said that it is totally not understood why the Redemption still hasn’t come. When the child hears such things, this intensifies his *emunah*, strengthening his understanding despite the

fact that there are questions that have no answers. Nevertheless, there is a reason, it's just that we can't understand it yet.

QUESTIONS ASKED BY MATURING ADULTS

The child grows, the simple world he's known until now becomes more complex and detailed. Abstract thought develops, together with the desire and the need to investigate and understand at greater depth. Not everything that was accepted as a given during childhood is understood now as well. Sometimes, there arise totally unexpected questions, and we must be there to provide answers as best we can.

"Today's younger generation is a special generation!" explains **Rochel Cohen**, a secondary school teacher. "If in the past, there were things that were not subject to discussion or debate, young people today deal with far more questions. Nothing is a given, and they want explanations for everything. Technological development and their exposure to other sources of information and other worlds of content produce even more questions. The complex reality they are dealing with is not easy to digest. They want to understand, they want to know why and how.

"As parents, it's important above all not to be afraid of questions. Let our children ask anything and be there for their questions. For if we won't be attentive to their inquiries, they will look for answers elsewhere. In contrast to our younger children, as the older children grow more mature, we have fewer possibilities of knowing how and where they search for their answers. This doesn't have to come from problem areas; it's enough when a classmate passes on incomplete information or a distortion of facts she heard somewhere. By then, it becomes much harder to uproot the mistakes generated as a result.

"In the past, there was an aversion to questions in matters of faith. And even today, despite the relative openness, children don't al-

ways dare to ask such questions, since they are liable to fear our reaction or of those in their immediate environment. Therefore, it is most important, as parents, that we convey to our children that they can ask anything. If we have already taught them in their childhood that you can ask questions but not every question has an answer, it will be much easier for us when we hear them asking such questions.

"Even if it is difficult and sometimes dissuades us, it's crucial to maintain an aura of calm and practicality. Don't be alarmed and don't attack - 'Why are you asking about that?' Try and give them complete answers and full disclosure. At this age, they are already much more aware of the fact that Mommy doesn't know everything, and it's also possible to open a sefer together and clarify certain matters. It gives the child a sense of closeness and self-respect when you say: 'That's a very interesting and important question. I still don't know the answer, but I hope and believe that we can find it. Come, let's see what the Rebbe MH"™M has to say about it.' There are sefarim with collections of the Rebbe's teachings on a variety of subjects, thus making it much easier to search and find answers to certain questions.

"Of course, it's always possible to ask a rav or mashpia, but what's important is always to give validity to the child and his question. Even if he asks something that seems a bit impudent, we should never let him feel that his questions might demean his value in our eyes."

So, let's closely examine the questions, in the hope that very soon indeed G-d will answer all our questions about the galus, foremost among them: "*Ad Mosai?*"... and He will already bring us the True and Complete Redemption, and then we will no longer have any questions.

Box: How A Jewish Child Asks a Question

On the passuk "And Hashem saw that man's wickedness was increasing ... Hashem regretted that He had made man and became sad of heart."

Rashi comments: “The Holy One, blessed be He, sees the future... Although it was revealed before Him that ultimately [men] would sin... He did not refrain from creating him for the sake of the righteous men who would ultimately arise.”

Rashi prefaces those statements with a problematic passage:

I wrote the following as a response to non-believers. An *apikores* (heretic) asked Rabbi Yehoshua ben Korcha: “Don’t you acknowledge that G-d sees the future?” Rabbi Yehoshua answered: “Of course.” If so, [the *apikores* continued,] “Why does the Torah tell us that He became sad, [since He already knew what would happen, He should not have been affected]?”

[Rabbi Yehoshua answered in allegory:] “Did you ever father a son?” “Yes.” “What did you do?” “I rejoiced...” “Didn’t you know your son would ultimately die?” “At a time of joy,” [the *apikores* answered,] “joy is appropriate. At a time of mourning, mourning is appropriate.” “The deeds of G-d reflect a similar pattern,” Rabbi Yehoshua replied.



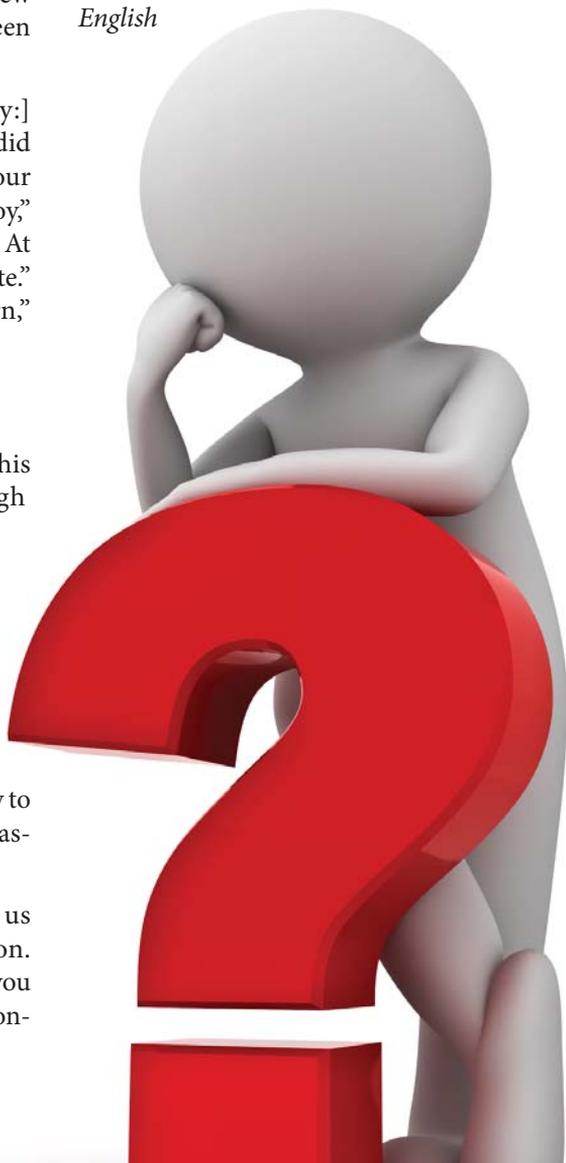
AMONG the questions raised by this passage are: a) Although it is important to “Know what to respond to an *apikores*,” this is not the goal of *Rashi*’s commentary on the Torah. On the contrary, *Rashi* sets as his goal explaining the simple meaning of the Torah. Why does he mention “a response to non-believers?” b) On the surface, the question: “How is it possible for G-d to have a change of heart?” is one that is likely to be asked any Jewish child. Why does *Rashi* associate this with *apikurses* (heresy)?

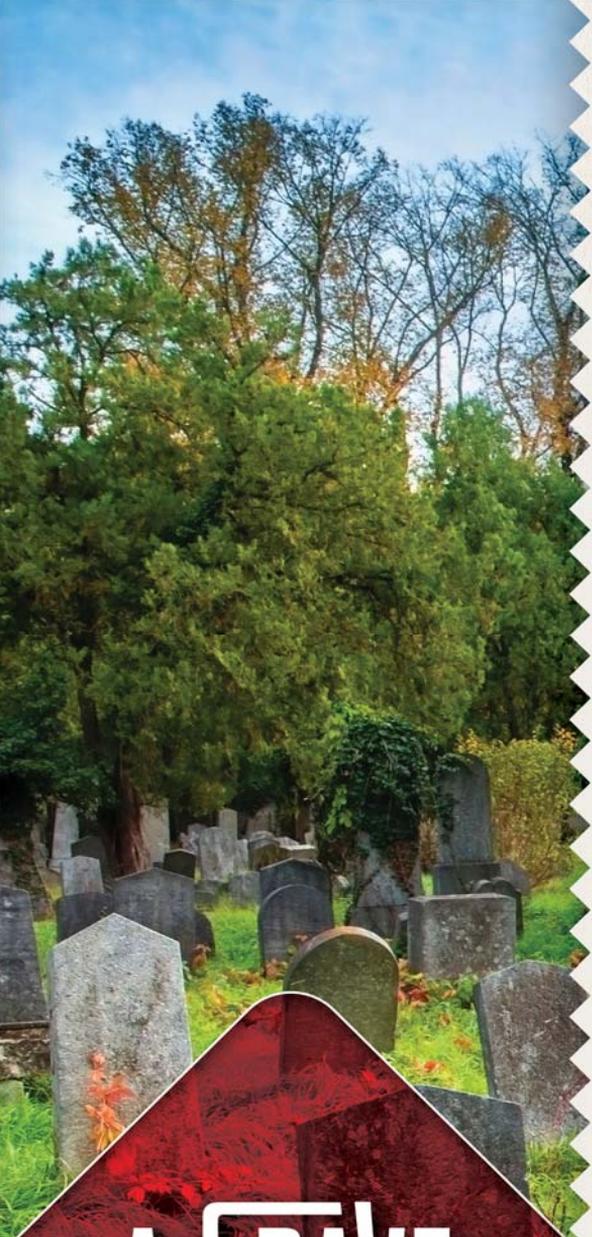
The answer is that *Rashi* is teaching us how a Jewish child should ask a question. An *apikores* comes with a challenge: “Don’t you acknowledge that G-d sees the future?” In con-

trast, a Jew believes that the Torah is true and he believes that G-d knows the future. There is room for questions, because a Jew is obligated to attempt to understand G-d. However, a Jewish child must ask in a way which reflects his faith in G-d. This implies a responsibility for teachers, that they must instruct their students in a manner which inculcates faith and belief.

[Similarly, a teacher must instruct a child not to drink *cholov akum* (milk not supervised by a Jew) for this leads to undesirable thoughts.] ■

From the Rebbe’s sicha of Parsha Bereishis 5751, reprinted from Sichos in English





A GRAVE SITUATION

A SERIALIZED EMOTIONAL JOURNEY

ALUMA S.

RECAP: *Noa, shlucha in a neighborhood in Yerushalayim, visits her mother's gravesite. A large chareidi family arrives at the cemetery helps to make a minyan for Kaddish. Noa feels that there's some inner connection between this family and her late mother. However, her efforts to find this connection prove unsuccessful. At the same time, she tries to establish a sense of unity between the sisters-in-law, but her efforts fall flat. With the encouragement of her mashpia, Noa decides to strengthen her connection with her father. A very close and warm relationship quickly develops between them. Devora Goldschmidt, daughter of Sara Erlstein a"h, renews contact.*



TZVI gets out of the elevator on the third floor. He stops for a moment, hesitates, and then decides to turn left. He looks at all the closed doors down the long corridor. Near the sixth door, he halts. "Amos Cohen, Investment Advisor." He straightens his tie for

a moment, combs back his forelock with his fingers, and knocks formally on the door. "It's open!" a voice called from inside the office.

He opened the door and walked in with sure steps. A moment later, he stopped dead in his tracks, his mouth agape in shock. This is not the way he imagined the gifted advisor that his insurance agent, Benny Abramowitz, recommended so highly.

He took a step back, looked again at the silver-plated sign attached to the door outside. "Amos Cohen, Investment Advisor." This was the right place. Apparently, it was the highly qualified advisor who was a little mixed up...

The office was a colossal mess. Completely upside down. There was no better word to describe it. Behind the heavy office table piled with newspapers, documents, books, and file folders – there sat on an old used office chair – a curly-haired man, slightly heavy set, dressed in a green tricot shirt covered by a gray and white checkered button-down shirt. He was busy pulling something out of one of the piles, and then he just muttered: "Another moment, please, OK?"

"I'm waiting," Tzvi replied in his low voice. He again straightened his tie with an involuntary motion of his hand. He laughed to himself: Even if he wouldn't have tied it, even if he would have tied it backwards – it still would have looked good in comparison to what was happening around him...

Amos extricated the file he was looking for, but it caused a small collapse. Yet, this didn't seem to move him. He gingerly straightened what was left, gathered up what had fallen, and then finally raised his eyes. "Welcome!" he said, smiling broadly. "Why don't you sit down?" he asked as he circled the table and removed the large piles of papers on one of the chairs standing there.

Tzvi brushed the barely visible dust from off the chair and sat down, placing his case on his knees.

"Yes," Amos smiled. "What brings you to us today?" Tzvi coughed slightly, as if he was still hesitant whether he had come to the right place. Afterwards, he pulled out a stapled file folder. He placed it on one of the piles facing Amos Cohen and said: "I have all kinds of funds that I have accumulated, invested in various projects. Everything is detailed here in this folder."

Amos opened the folder and began scanning through the pages as he rocked himself in his chair. "It seems that you invested your money rather well. Why have you come to me?"

Tzvi took a deep breath, quickly collecting his thoughts in his mind. "I have twelve grandchildren from my three children, and also... also an adopted son, you might say."

"G-d has been good to you," Amos smiled.

Tzvi smiled as well. "I want to open savings accounts for them, or trust accounts, or whatever you might recommend to be the most profitable and secure, of course."

"I understand." Amos was now spurred to action. "Come, let's see what we can do." He moved with his chair towards the computer table standing at the side of the office, a barren corner with another chair for Tzvi. Amos began racing with his computer mouse across the screen.

He opened windows, created diagrams, inserted data into simulators. Speaking to himself a little, he asks numerous questions and provides explanations to Tzvi sitting near him.

The pace becomes frenetic. Within a few minutes after the moment the computer was turned on, Tzvi felt that he was being drawn into a tunnel, unable to see anything except numbers...

When Amos finished creating a good and solid investment program – Tzvi breathed a sigh of relief. He looks at his watch, has it already been an hour? Now, he understands what they were talking about when they sent him here... He paid the amount they had agreed upon on the phone, when he made the appointment to meet. He moves to shake Amos' hand as an expression of his sincere thanks. As Amos' large hand grasps his, Tzvi suddenly remembers something: "Tell me, when I open these trust funds in the children's names, does the bank inform them about this?"

"Obviously," Amos smiled. "That's all the fun, isn't it? The moment that you inform them... Personally, I wouldn't wait until you get notification from the bank..."

Amos still didn't release Tzvi's hand, and Tzvi felt a little perplexed. "I'll tell you what," he whispered. "I'm only in touch with some of them, while with the others, I'll still trying to re-establish contact. So, perhaps I should wait on this until a connection can be built between us."

Amos tilted his head to the side. He now placed his other hand upon his as well, enveloping Tzvi's hand from every direction.

"Don't wait, Abba'le," he said. "For what? Parents are little like G-d, aren't they? When He brings down the rain, He brings it down for everyone, not just for those connected to Him. You have what to give? Give it. Our children – they're all what's left to us in the end."



NOW, *it's a shul. It's small and dusty, and it has the smell of age. Rachel grabbed me in the afternoon and gave me the key.*

"It's a pity that it's closed," she said. "Wipe off the dust and wash the floor, so they can organize minyanim for Mincha and Maariv there."

"To whom do I return the key?" I ask her.

|| AFTER WORK, I GO BACK IN QUIETLY WITH MY KEY. I FEEL LIKE A THIEF. ON THE OLD KITCHEN COUNTER, THERE WAS A JAR OF INSTANT COFFEE AND A PACKAGE OF SUGAR, WHICH HADN'T BEEN THERE BEFORE.

"Hold on to it for the time being. I have another one."

I get an idea. "Can I continue cleaning at night after work?"

"Of course," she replies. "You'll also have time to check that all the windows are closed tightly and perhaps go through the sefarim to see if there are any in need of repair."

I go inside and start raising the chairs. There was a carpeted bench in the kitchen, similar to what you find in Sephardic synagogues. I'll have where to sleep at night. I didn't feel right lying to her this way, but I didn't have any choice. I lock the shul up reasonably clean and run to my job as a waiter.

After work, I go back in quietly with my key. I feel like a thief. On the old kitchen counter, there was a jar of instant coffee and a package of sugar, which hadn't been there before. A folded mattress was waiting in the corner.

I wasn't fooling anyone. They had me pegged right away.

At that moment, it became clear to me – I'll give my life to this shul. It can be certain that it fell into the right hands. ■

To be continued...

WE recently had a cozy women's gathering at our Chabad House where we sipped soups and discussed simcha. Chatting with other mothers, I found that I'm not alone in being gifted bundles of worry together with our precious bundles of joy. It seems that as soon as we become mothers, there's just so much to worry about. So much to stress about. To second guess ourselves about. To think twice about.

RAIZEL LIBEROW

BUNDLES OF JOY, BUNDLES OF WORRY

THE other night I was concerned about something particular which was just circulating in my mind non-stop.

A little later, I opened up a sefer — Teachings of the Rebbe on Chinuch — determined to read something short and put my mind at ease.

The Rebbe explained that there are 3 partners in raising a child. What's the division of responsibilities? While the parents are entrusted the pure piece of G-d to lovingly care for and be *mechanech* spiritually; the Eibishter's role is to take care of our children *bgashmius* - including feeding him, providing his parnassa, caring for his health, and the like...(Hisvaaduyos 5743, vol. 3, p. 1482)

Suddenly the bundle of worries felt just a little lighter. It's not all up to us.

We daven with our children, wash their pure hands *negel vasser*, dance and sing with them, say their kapital tehillim. And Hashem will ensure we have sufficient funds to feed them, will keep them healthy and strong and help them grow into wonderful, contributing members of our society.

Like the Yidden left Mitzrayim with their bundles on the back and with complete faith that Hashem would provide for their needs in the barren wilderness; let's have faith in our Partner and He won't let us down. ■

